

Wycombe Wanderers 2, Wokingham Town 1

WITH MEMORIES of Tooting and thoughts of Wealdstone in mind, Wycombe Wanderers used Saturday's intermission from the Amateur Cup to repay an old debt by disposing of holders, Wokingham Town, in the Berks and Bucks Senior Cup, third round, at Loakes Park.

Memories? The Athenian League Division One visitors scored a late equaliser rather as Wycombe had done at Sandy Lane the previous week; and it seemed a similar snatch might be on the way, this time going against Wanderers.

Thoughts? Four members of the 'backbench' were drafted into Wanderers' line up for what is normally regarded as a major prestige competition.

On Saturday, Wycombe's manager, Brian Lee put in deputy 'keeper Kevin O'Brien for John Maskell and withdrew both Ian Rundle and Charlie Gale to give Keith Stephenson and Dave Thomas their head.

He also pulled Tony Horseman out of the attack for a rest, experimenting instead with Keith Blunt playing a number ten's role more from mid-field than the front line.

Stephenson seemed slower to react than when he commanded a regular spot in the back division; yet Thomas, who has impressed sufficiently in pre-Christmas mid-week outings to suggest that he might be ready to step in place of the off-form Rundle, turned in an efficient, quiet, game.

By Mike Whitesman

Meanwhile, Blunt, a fiery customer anywhere on the field, should on past displays have had his selection made automatic before now.

Playing only his second 90 minutes in daylight since joining Wanderers from Chesham this season, the patient O'Brien did all that was asked of him. But, like Hazells in round 2, Wokingham made small demands.

Indeed it was Town's goalminder, Trevor Rockett, a 17 year-old Wokingham Minor side member making only his fifth senior team appearance, who bore the brunt of Wycombe's early raiding.

Wanderers could have been two, and should have been at least one, ahead in double quick time as they chased revenge for last season's quarter final defeat at Loakes Park.

Both Stephenson and Geoff Anthony were away and past Rockett only to abuse their chances in the 10th and 13th minutes respectively.

O'Brien did not come into serious action until three minutes later when Peter Suddaby failed his connection with a clearance of a long Wokingham free kick.

Seven days prior to the Amateur Cup visit to Lower Mead, Wanderers had to steer clear of injury trouble.

So all Wycombe held its breath when Anthony was helped off for treatment on what at first looked a bad thigh injury in the 36th minute. But the Welsh wizard was back in the game two minutes later, and another two minutes on, Wanderers celebrated his 'safety' with an opening goal.

A cross from Dave Thomas flew off the left wing and into the goalmouth, in front of which John Delaney stood placed to power home a well taken header.

As a member of the Slough Town side which had failed to Wokingham in the '69 final, Delaney must have found his breakthrough doubly-satisfying.

Wycombe looked winners all the way after half-time, although, with Rockett soon unloading his early match nerves to produce some mature goalkeeping, Wokingham offered several scares.

Scott, for instance, knocked Ford's free kick onto the home crossbar 17 minutes from full time, as a warning that Wycombe would need another goal to make the tie completely safe.

Five minutes later, the hint became a reality. Ron Harper was launched on a dashing 30 yard solo run, bamboozling the entire home defence as he curved in towards goal, and whipped his shot past O'Brien for a surprise equaliser.

Ten minutes to play and all square, Wanderers added potential fire power in hopes of clinching a first time victory,

On went Tony Horseman for Stephenson, while the visitors gambled on replacing Windiate with young Alan Lucas.

Johnny Hutchinson scored the deciding goal after 84 minutes, driving hard and true from the right of Town's area.

Wycombe Wanderers: K. O'Brien; K. Stephenson (sub.: A. Horseman), D. Thomas; P. Suddaby, J. Delaney, J. Lailey; G. Anthony, B. Baker, K. Searle, K. Blunt, J. Hutchinson.

Wokingham Town: T. Rockett; G. Thomas, J. Ford; C. Goodenough, P. Royston, M. Scott, R. Brill, E. Harper, P. Brinsden, G. Haddrell, A. Windiate (sub.: A. Lucas).

Attendance: 2,040. Gate receipt: £248 2s. Od.